

PLAYBOOK 01 OF 3

Cloud-Based AI UGC Video Creation

The fastest way to produce scroll-stopping AI video ads. Go from script to published ad in under 30 minutes with zero hardware requirements.

Cost: \$5-20 per video at scale

Time: 15-30 minutes per video

Hardware: None required (100% cloud)

Built by Shivendra Rawat | Founder, Second Step
getsecondstep.com | growth@shivendrarawat.com

The 6-Step Cloud Pipeline

This is the exact workflow we use to produce AI UGC videos for clients. Each step uses the best-in-class cloud tool for that function.

1 Script Generation

Use Claude or ChatGPT with a direct-response framework. We recommend the PAS structure (Problem-Agitate-Solution) for most ad scripts. Keep scripts under 60 seconds - 30-45 seconds is the conversion sweet spot for paid social.

Tool: Claude Pro (\$20/mo) or ChatGPT Plus (\$20/mo)

2 Voice Generation

Feed your script to a TTS engine. Choose a voice that matches your target demographic. Slightly imperfect delivery (natural pauses, emphasis) outperforms robotic perfection.

Tool: Fish Audio (\$15/mo) or ElevenLabs (\$22/mo)

3 Avatar Generation

Select a stock avatar that matches your audience. Upload the audio from Step 2. The avatar automatically lip-syncs to your script.

Tool: HeyGen Creator (\$29/mo)

Money-saving hack: Standard avatars cost **6x less per credit** than custom avatars. Always start with standard for testing.

4 Video Assembly

Combine the avatar video with captions, product shots, b-roll, and branding elements. Use templates for consistency across variants.

Tool: Creatomate (\$25/mo) or CapCut (Free)

5 Quality Check

Watch at 1x speed with sound. Check lip-sync accuracy, audio quality, caption timing, brand compliance. Takes 2 minutes per video.

6 Export & Deploy

Export in platform-specific formats: 9:16 for Reels/TikTok/Stories, 1:1 for feed, 16:9 for YouTube. Always export at 1080p minimum.

Tool Comparison

There are dozens of AI UGC tools. These are the ones worth your time and money in 2026.

PLATFORM	STARTING PRICE	BEST FOR	AVATAR QUALITY	EASE OF USE
HeyGen	\$29/mo	Best all-around	Excellent	Easy
Arcads	\$100/mo	E-commerce UGC	Very Good	Very Easy
Creatify	\$39/mo	URL-to-video	Good	Easiest
Synthesisia	\$22/mo	Corporate/training	Very Good	Easy
D-ID	\$5.90/mo	Budget option	Fair	Easy

Our Recommended Stack

Claude (\$20) + Fish Audio (\$15) + HeyGen (\$29) + Creatomate (\$25)

Total: **\$89/month** for ~15-20 videos

Compare to traditional UGC: \$300-500 per video = \$4,500-10,000 for the same volume

Cost Breakdown at Scale

VOLUME	COST PER VIDEO	MONTHLY TOTAL	VS TRADITIONAL
1 video	\$15-20	\$15-20	95% savings
10 videos	\$8-12	\$80-120	97% savings
50 videos	\$5-8	\$250-400	98% savings
100 videos	\$3-5	\$300-500	99% savings

How Costs Decrease at Volume

Fixed costs (subscriptions) stay the same while per-video variable costs (credits, API calls) decrease with bulk pricing. Annual plans save an additional 20-30% on most tools.

Money-Saving Hacks

1. Always Start with Standard Avatars

HeyGen's standard avatars cost 1 credit per video. Custom avatars cost 5-6 credits. For ad testing, standard avatars are perfectly fine. Only invest in custom avatars once you have a proven winning script.

2. Batch Your Renders

Most tools charge per-render or per-credit. Plan your content calendar and render in batches. This avoids the "one-off tax" of small renders and lets you use credits more efficiently.

3. Use Annual Plans

Every major tool offers 20-30% discounts on annual billing. If you are committed to AI UGC (you should be), the savings are significant:

- HeyGen: \$29/mo monthly vs \$24/mo annual = save \$60/year
- ElevenLabs: \$22/mo vs \$18/mo annual = save \$48/year
- Creatomate: \$25/mo vs \$20/mo annual = save \$60/year

4. Use Free Tiers Strategically

Most tools have free tiers or trial credits. Use these for initial testing and proof-of-concept. Only commit to paid plans once you have validated that the tool fits your workflow.

5. Reuse Audio Across Variants

Generate one great voiceover, then use it with different avatars, backgrounds, and b-roll. The audio production cost stays fixed while you multiply output.

6. Invest in Script Quality

A great script with a standard avatar outperforms a mediocre script with a custom avatar every time. Spend your money on the message, not the messenger.

Quality Optimization Tips

- **Match avatar to audience:** 25-year-old female for skincare, 40-year-old male for B2B SaaS
- **Hook in 2 seconds:** First line must stop the scroll. Test 10+ hooks per concept.
- **Caption everything:** 85% of social video is watched without sound
- **Cut every 5-8 seconds:** Do not show talking head for 45 seconds straight. Add b-roll, product shots, text overlays
- **Add micro-imperfections:** A small pause, looking away briefly -- these read as authentic
- **Test at volume:** Produce 10 variants, test for a week, double down on winners

FTC Compliance Checklist

This is non-negotiable. The FTC's 2025 guidance on AI-generated content has clear requirements.

COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

- AI avatars do NOT claim to be real customers sharing real experiences
- No fabricated testimonials or fake reviews from AI presenters
- All product claims are truthful and substantiated regardless of who/what delivers them
- Disclosure included when AI avatar could be confused with real endorser
- Ad clearly identified as an advertisement (required by platform)
- No misleading before/after comparisons using AI-generated imagery
- Health, financial, and results claims comply with standard FTC guidelines
- Landing page messaging aligns with ad claims

Safe Approaches

- **Presenter/explainer format:** "Here is how this product works" -- compliant
- **Feature walkthrough:** Demonstrating product features without personal claims -- compliant
- **Educational content:** Teaching about a topic related to your product -- compliant

Risky Approaches (Avoid)

- AI avatar saying "I have been using this for 3 months and..." -- not compliant
- Fake "unboxing" or "first impression" from AI -- misleading
- AI-generated before/after results -- requires real substantiation

Ready to Start Producing AI UGC?

Book a free 30-minute strategy call. We will audit your current creative workflow and recommend the right AI UGC setup for your budget and volume.

BOOK YOUR FREE CALL

Second Step | A performance marketing agency powered by AI

getsecondstep.com | growth@shivendrarawat.com

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